Amendments to the Claims

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application.

Listing of Claims:

What is claimed is:

1. (Cancelled)

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81. (New) A method for providing traffic information, the method comprising:

for each segment of a route between an origin point and a destination point, performing a time-dependent journey planning calculation, based on a time during which a vehicle is predicted to be travelling through the segment, to produce a segment result;

forming at least one route result, the at least one route result being formed based on a plurality of the segment results;

storing the at least one route result in a digital storage means; and

accessing the rapid access means for use in responding to a user request for traffic information for a journey between the origin point and the destination point.

82. (New) A method according to claim 81, wherein performing the time-dependent journey planning calculation for each segment comprises determining a segment duration for traversing the segment based on a predicted vehicle speed for the segment at the time during which the vehicle is predicted to be travelling through the segment.

83. (New) A method according to claim 82, wherein forming the at least one route result comprises summing a plurality of segment durations to produce an overall route duration.

84. (New) A method according to claim 81, wherein performing the time-dependent journey planning calculation for each segment comprises determining a predicted vehicle speed for traversing the segment based on the time during which the vehicle is predicted to be travelling through the segment.

85. (New) A method according to claim 84, wherein forming the at least one route result comprises averaging a plurality of predicted vehicle speeds, each corresponding to a segment, to produce an overall predicted route speed.

86. (New) A method according to claim 81, wherein performing the time-dependent journey planning calculation is based on a time of day and a day of the week during which the vehicle is predicted to be travelling through the segment.

87. (New) A method according to claim 86, wherein the day of the week is selected from a group comprising Bank Holiday, Day before Bank Holiday, Day after Bank Holiday, Sunday, Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, and Saturday.

88. (New) A method according to claim 81, wherein the rapid access means comprises a look-up table.

89. (New) A method according to claim 81, further comprising:

receiving real time data relating to real time vehicle location from a plurality of vehicle-bound probes; and

creating a matrix of vehicle speeds relative to at least a plurality of time of day divisions and a plurality of routes, based on the real time vehicle location data.

90. (New) A method according to claim 89, wherein the plurality of vehicle-bound probes include at least one mobile telephone.

91. (New) A method according to claim 89, further comprising:

creating a first matrix of recommended most economic routes relative to at least a plurality of time of day divisions and a plurality of routes, based on the matrix of vehicle speeds.

92. (New) A method according to claim 91, further comprising, in creating the first matrix of recommended most economic routes, removing outlier vehicle speeds, and vehicle speeds related to unforecastable events, from the matrix of vehicle speeds using statistical analysis.

93. (New) A method according to claim 91, wherein the first matrix of recommended most economic routes comprises a plurality of route matrix elements, each route matrix element corresponding to a pairing of an origin point with a destination point, and comprising: a route string, a shortest distance corresponding to the route string, a time corresponding to the route string, and a cost corresponding to the route string.

94. (New) A method according to claim 93, wherein the route matrix elements further comprise entries for a plurality of possible vehicle types.

95. (New) A method according to claim 91, further comprising:

identifying, in real time, an area of traffic congestion between the origin point and the destination point; and

determining an alternative, second matrix of recommended most economic routes based on the identified area of traffic congestion.

96. (New) A method according to claim 95, wherein the area of traffic congestion is identified using a database of traffic patterns.

97. (New) A method according to claim 95, wherein the area of traffic congestion is identified by determining whether real time vehicle location data from a plurality of vehicle-bound probes correspond to a pre-determined level of variance from historic real time vehicle speeds.

98. (New) A system for providing traffic information, the system comprising:

a route segment processor for performing, for each segment of a route between an origin point and a destination point, a time-dependent journey planning calculation

based on a time during which a vehicle is predicted to be travelling through the segment, to produce a segment result;

a route result formation means for forming at least one route result, the at least one route result being formed based on a plurality of the segment results;

a rapid access means, in a digital storage means, for storing the at least one route result; and

a user request processor for accessing the rapid access means for use in responding to a user request for traffic information for a journey between the origin point and the destination point.

99. (New) A system according to claim 98, wherein the route segment processor comprises means for determining a segment duration for traversing each segment, based on a predicted vehicle speed for the segment at the time during which the vehicle is predicted to be travelling through the segment.

100. (New) A system according to claim 99, wherein the route result formation means comprises means for summing plurality of segment durations to produce an overall route duration.

101. (New) A system according to claim 98, wherein the route segment processor comprises means for determining a predicted vehicle speed for traversing the segment based on the time during which the vehicle is predicted to be travelling through the segment.

102. (New) A system according to claim 101, wherein the route result formation means comprises means for averaging a plurality of predicted vehicle speeds, each corresponding to a segment, to produce an overall predicted route speed.

103. (New) A system according to claim 98, wherein the route segment processor comprises means for performing the time-dependent journey planning calculation based on a time of day and a day of the week during which the vehicle is predicted to be travelling through the segment.

104. (New) A system according to claim 103, wherein the day of the week is selected from a group comprising Bank Holiday, Day before Bank Holiday, Day after Bank Holiday, Sunday, Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, and Saturday.

105. (New) A system according to claim 98, wherein the rapid access means comprises a look-up table.